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Registry
71-2696

18 May 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, National Estimates

SUBJECT: Production of Military Estimates

1. As we all know, NIE's 11-8-70 and 11-3-71 have been well received by consumers at the highest levels of the Government, and I am glad that our military estimates now appear to be on the right track. No doubt they can be further improved as we become more accustomed to the new and extended format, and as we receive suggestions and recommendations from our readers.

2. Production of these estimates was inordinately delayed, owing in part to the much greater length and detail in which the material was set forth. But there appear also to have been problems arising out of the procedures, admittedly experimental, which I outlined to you last year for producing these papers. I want, therefore, to modify and clarify my earlier memorandum so as to insure that the estimates are produced more expeditiously.

3. The Board of National Estimates, and specifically the Board member designated as Chairman of the paper, remain responsible for the content and structure of the estimate as a whole. An Agency task force, headed by a senior substantive analyst from the DD/I or DD/S&T and with membership from the substantive offices of the DD/I, DD/S&T and the ONE Staff, will support the BNE Chairman and be directly responsible to him. Members of the task force will also be responsible for keeping the DD/I and DD/S&T informed of the progress of the estimate and any potentially significant problems.

4. The first stage in production of the estimate will be meetings among the BNE, the Agency task force, and Community representatives to discuss and agree on the main issues to be addressed, the scope of their treatment, and a working outline in as much detail as may be feasible. The BNE Chairman will then task the various participants for inputs -- in the form of contributions, draft sections of text or annexes, statements of potentially divergent positions -- with a view to insuring that the special competence of each is fully utilized.

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5. Working in close consultation with the Board Chairman, the head of the task force will direct the preparation of an initial draft. Inputs from the participating USIB agencies and committees should be used, when feasible, as the basis for sections of this draft; it should also incorporate divergent views on major issues. The initial draft will be reviewed and revised by BNE to insure that a coherent, integrated, and balanced working draft is sent to USIB agencies for coordination in the customary manner.

6. Obviously we must produce these estimates on the schedule to which we commit ourselves and on which consumers rely. I wish, therefore, that all concerned should give to their preparation the highest priority, subject only to clearly overriding demands of work on other projects of great urgency.

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Richard Helms  
Director

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